

ABSTRACT

THESIS: The Inside Story: An analysis of the Policies and Laws Governing the Designation and Protection of Historic Interiors

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DATE: May 2012

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Historic interiors are an integral component to the historic fabric of our communities, yet the protection of interiors is fodder for debate among preservationists as to whether interiors are afforded equal protection as exteriors. This debate arises because interiors present unique challenges, namely, issues of public access, designation of publicly versus privately owned interiors, and infringement on Fifth Amendment rights.

This thesis will examine federal, state, and local government policies, organizations, and laws, and discuss their impact on the protection of historic interiors. Five seminal court cases that examine legal precedents for designating interiors will also be addressed. Finally, case studies provide examples of how two communities have used local preservation laws to preserve and protect significant interiors in their cities. This thesis will show that historic interiors are subject to controls that ensure their preservation and designation.